

# Cooperative interaction. Synergy between manga publishing companies and fan activity in Japan

Tutorizado por el profesor Artur Lozano

## Abstract

The synergetic relationship existing between publishing companies and fan-driven activities are a key feature of the Japanese manga industry. In this paper, we explain how manga magazines invite their readership to take part in rating the series being published, search for new talents using contests, and have started partnering with art websites such as Pixiv in the search of active interaction with readers and amateur artists. We also discuss the links between amateur and professional production and the possible advantages *dōjinshi* (fanzines) present for commercial companies.

Judit Moreno Salat

Graduada en Estudios de Asia Oriental  
(Universitat Autònoma de Barcelona y  
Kansai Gaidai University, Osaka)

Interesada principalmente en la  
cultura popular japonesa

## Introduction

Due to the impressive economic recovery after World War II that has been often defined as nothing short of a miracle, both the appeal and threat of Japan used to be its wealth and commercial power (cf. Lozano, 2009). Nowadays, and after the collapse of the asset price bubble in the 90s that resulted in two decades of uninterrupted recession, the island country still draws attention to it, but for different reasons. In the words of McGray, Japan has become a cultural superpower, whose "growing cultural presence has created a mighty engine of national cool" (McGray, 2002).

The past two decades have witnessed how Japanese popular culture products broke into foreign markets (Wong, 2006). However, it is within Japan itself that we encounter the biggest market for the country's own consumer goods. In 1960, Prime Minister Ikeda's Economic Development Plan focused on Japanese population not only as producers, but also as consumers and source of income for the recuperation of the country. Ikeda thus popularized the image of spending as positive, breaking with the traditional encouragement of frugality the government had defended for decades (Hein, 1993: 114). Long past the consumer boom made possible by the affluent Japanese economy of the 70s and the 80s, we find nowadays that consumer culture in Japan has been severely affected by the burst of the bubble first, and the most recent economical crisis in 2008, which have lowered average incomes. These two economical crises have taken its toll on cultural markets, and the sales of cultural products have been further affected by the rise of Internet. Nonetheless, Japanese

households are said to have actually maintained or increased their expenditure on luxury and leisure instead of decreasing it (Garon, 2006; Murakami, 2012).

*Manga*<sup>1</sup> is the Japanese word for comic. Published either in serial magazines or paperback volumes, manga includes a wide array of genres and styles under a single term. Some of its most popular categories include *shōnen* (aimed at teenage boys), *shōjo* (for teenage girls), *seinen* (for young adults, mainly men) and *josei* (for adult women), but there are many more divisions that can be as specific as sports, *mecha* (giant robots) or *maho shōjo* (magical girl). There are carefully documented manga that explain business, politics, history, or biographies of famous people, as well as everyday life, romantic comedy and underground experimental works among many others.

According to Harumi Befu, “manga culture is well developed in Japan because of the massive scale of the manga industry, and children and adults alike have achieved a high level of manga literacy” (2003: 12). Manga has also been defined as “one of the features of mass culture in present-day Japan” (Grigsby, 1998: 65). Manga magazines are cheaply printed, usually discarded after reading, and ubiquitous: they can be easily found in any of Japan’s numerous convenience stores, bookshops and manga cafés. Japanese people can be seen reading manga in trains and buses, while waiting on the station and even inside the stores.

The publishing scene of manga as we know it today was born around 1950, when Tokyo based magazines began including a great amount of comics in their publications and popularized the medium in Japan. They established weekly production cycles that were highly demanding for the artists. Marketing strategies and readers’ requests were carefully considered, limiting and conditioning the artistic production (Schodt, 1983: 66). Editors came to play an essential role in deciding the contents of what was being drawn, and became responsible for major decisions taken throughout the whole creation process. This is the system that we still encounter in nowadays’ weekly and monthly manga magazines. Five major publishing companies have mainly dominated the scene since then: Shueisha, Shogakukan, Kodansha, Akita Shoten and Hakusensha.

Like any other commercial sector, the manga industry is driven by profit seeking (Kinsella, 2000; Prough, 2006). Having profits as the main goal, it is vital for editors to constantly come up with fresh ideas, secure a pool of reliable, skilled artists and pay close attention to the public’s tastes and opinions. Despite the steady decline of circulation rates starting in the mid 1990s, manga magazines and books have been the main staples of the publishing trade in Japan for a long time after the end of World War II (Japan Book Publishers Association, 2012: 9). The absolute numbers still bear evidence of the significant volume of manga production and overall gains. Sales of compiled book volumes of manga totaled 267.5 billion yen in 2012 (Oricon Style, 2013).

On the other end of the consumption process we encounter a wealth of fans that are involved in the products in ways other than purchasing and collecting them. Japan’s manga industry is an example of how commercial enterprises have adapted to fan activity, creativity and demands, and benefited from it. This dialogue is now taking a step further owing to new technologies and the spread of Internet usage.

1 Hereafter foreign terms will be written in italics when they are introduced in the text, and they will be printed without format in subsequent occurrences. Even though the terms being used will be defined and explained throughout the paper, a glossary has been enclosed in Annex 1 as a means to facilitate the understanding of the text.

In this paper we will analyze the synergetic relationship existing between Japanese manga publishers and fan-driven activities. After reviewing the theoretical framework relevant to our topic, we will start our study explaining how manga magazines invite their readership to take part in rating the series being published, search for new talents using contests, and have started partnering with art websites such as Pixiv in the search of active interaction with readers and amateur artists. We will then proceed to discuss the links between amateur and professional production and the possible advantages *dōjinshi* (fanzines) present for commercial companies.

This paper's analysis draws from specialized literature consisting of papers published by academic journals and books that have performed research on the topic, together with material published by manga companies and official data released by publishing associations and public institutions. Participant observation was performed at Osaka Comic City (November 2012), Tokyo's Comic Market (December 2012), Osaka Super Comic City (March 2013) and specialized shops like Mandarake and K-Books in Osaka and Tokyo. An interview to a *dōjinshi* artist and manga researcher who did an internship at Shogakukan Creative was also conducted in April 2013. The interviewee will be referred to as Kan throughout the paper.

## Blurred boundaries between consumers and producers

The last decades have witnessed an increase of scholarly research on mass media and its consumers, as well as a growing attention to Japanese popular culture in general, and manga in particular. Cultural studies on fan culture have developed at the same time. The French cultural theorist Michel de Certeau introduced the concept of consumption as "secondary production" (1980: 30). He presented consumers not as mere passive receivers of information, but as being able to subvert what is being given to them. Consumption becomes the act of using and manipulating the product by appropriating the original contents and giving them personal meanings and interpretations. To Certeau consumers are "textual poachers", travelers that "move across lands belonging to someone else, like nomads poaching their way across fields they did not write" (ib., 174). Henry Jenkins's *Textual Poachers* (1992) takes Certeau's ideas as a source to further study fan consumption processes. As explained by Storey, for Jenkins "there is no hard distinction between readers and writers. Fan culture is not just about consumption, it is also about the production of texts" (2003: 143). Appropriation of texts is empowering because it leads to a participatory culture system rather than mere spectatorship (Jenkins, 1992: 284).

The blurring of boundaries between consumers and producers becomes crucial to understand manga creation and consumption dynamics. Readers often share their magazines with friends and siblings, and discuss with them their interpretations and ideas on the texts. Fan fictions, fan art and fan comics are self-produced and shared through existing distribution channels like the Internet, and the process continues when other fans comment and add up to these amateur interpretations. Manga authors themselves are often influenced by readers' opinions, other authors and existing works<sup>2</sup>.

---

2 For instance, manga author Shin Shinmoto explains in an interview how she prepared to draw a horror story, a genre she had no experience in: "I borrowed many horror manga from the publisher, and checked the recent popular horror works for reference. After a while you start to see the theory behind horror manga, so I took it into my work" (Shinmoto, 2011).

Otsuka Eiji and Hiroki Azuma offer further reflection upon the consumer as a producer, and question established notions of original and copy that are highly relevant when analyzing fan-produced derivative works like *dōjinshi*. Otsuka argues that what is being consumed nowadays in commodities like manga, anime and games is the “grand narrative” embedded in them: the overall worldview, program or system that constitutes the world where the story is taking place. The era, place, history, manners of living, characters, interpersonal relations and so on constitute the logic system in which the account is occurring<sup>3</sup>. A particular story becomes but one of the multiple “small narratives” that can exist within the system; the circumstances, relationships and events revolving around specific characters in a particular time and place within the overall narrative.

By creating *dōjinshi*, fans are not simply plagiarizing. The original work becomes merely the “raw material” from where the underlying system is extracted (Otsuka, 1989: 110). Fans produce new narratives, new variations existing within the same world as the original work. Therefore, the merit of the variation being presented, rather than which is the original work, becomes the decisive factor when judging them (ib., 113). This also explains why the term “derivative works” rather than “copies” is preferably used. When it comes to the appraisal of variations, however, it is relevant to take into consideration the fact that fans have an exceptional emotional implication with the product. This often leads to fidelity to a singular grand narrative that frames their consumption patterns. As a result, judgment on aesthetics or narrative merits of a particular variation is passed afterwards the initial identification of the narrative as their preferred one.

Hiroki Azuma, following Otsuka’s steps, analyzes how the distinction between original and copy becomes blurred as a system based on “database versus simulacra” emerges (1989: 64). The grand narrative Otsuka finds behind works produced until the 80s is substituted by a fragmented database comprising settings and characters. This aggregation of raw information without a grand narrative is read up by fans, who can then create their own small narratives, or simulacra. Jean Baudrillard’s arguments on the progressive dominance of *simulacrum*, an interim form of commodity that is neither the original product nor a copy, was one of the foundations for Azuma’s analysis (ib., 32).

In a wider context, recent trends in fan activity and participation beyond corporate control suggested by the birth of new forms of understanding public culture have prompted the questioning of traditional notions of ownership, copyright and cultural production. Scholars are analyzing the way new technologies have facilitated unauthorized distribution and alteration of media products, and also how they have enabled networking, participation, and sharing in the process of fan consumption and creation. Jenkins recently coined the term “convergence culture”, by which he summarizes the three relating concepts of media convergence, participative culture and collective intelligence (2006: 2).

Similarly, Ian Condry proposes the idea of “dark energy” (2010: 193). This concept refers to the often-unseen social forces that drive the circulation of media through numerous channels, such as peer-to-peer file sharing networks. Dark energy is driving an increased networking between fans, content, technology and producers. It makes consumers go further the actual moment of commodification by sharing, changing, or creating something new from the products after the consumption act itself.

<sup>3</sup> This is further developed for the anime industrial context in Condry 2009, where he translates *sekaikan* as world-setting.

As contrasted with media producers in the US and Europe, who have increasingly attempted to limit fan activity where it falls out of their reach, we will proceed to analyze how manga publishing companies involve their readers in the production process. It is not a pink-colored, “anything goes” relationship, and there still remain conflicts and controversies revolving around the role of fan activity, yet manga publishers have established communication channels with fans that are not found in other countries and merit further analysis. They already have venues and channels for the higher degree of participation Jenkins includes in his convergence culture concept, and they have found ways to use fans’ dark energy to their own advantage. We argue that the input of fans decisively shapes the published products, and that fan activity can have benefits for manga publishers as a source of new ideas and audiences.

## Participatory systems

The ongoing dialogue between manga publishers and manga fans is a two-way process where both of them let each other know their opinions, decisions and views on what is being published. Here we will focus on the venues that publishers make available for fans to make their opinions known and share their own creations in manga magazines. These include participatory systems in their publications aiming at gathering both readers’ feedback and their artistic contributions in search for new talents. Participatory strategies have mainly taken the form of opinion surveys, popularity rankings, fan-art sections and contests that enable bidirectional communication and turn manga magazines and books into a highly interactive medium.

In the first place, opinion surveys and popularity rankings can be found in almost every publication in Japan, and periodical manga magazines and books are no exception. Surveys in the form of a postcard are enclosed in publications to be filled in and sent to the publishing company (see figure 1). The survey can vary depending on the publication, but usually inquires about statistical data like age and gender of the reader. It also asks how the reader came to know about the product, and what made them purchase it. Open questions on favorite authors and titles, what the last interesting readings have been, and the overall impressions and opinions about the purchased book usually close the survey. Publishers often encourage participation by offering the possibility to win a prize when sending a survey. Some magazines receive several thousands (from around 3000 to 7000) of completed surveys each month, which requires hiring an outside company to handle winner selection and tallying of readers’ answers (Prough, 2006: 126).

This type of questionnaire establishes a dialogue between editors and fans, and brings in consumers’ opinions when the time comes to make decisions. Questions on favorite authors and titles other than the purchased item, as well as the last readings, help pinpoint consumer’s preferences and tastes. They also facilitate identifying target audiences with shared interests in a number of themes, styles, genres or characters. The survey enables a much more accurate evaluation of a product’s reception than a mere analysis of sales and profits. It gives a voice to the reader and makes the publishing company and its editors approachable to an extent. As explained by Kan in her interview, “these surveys and polls have a great impact on the decision process”.



郵便はがき  
119-0163  
東京都千代田区一ツ橋2-5-10  
集英社 週刊少年ジャンプ編集部  
週刊少年ジャンプ19号  
あの遊名シェフが大公開!!  
春の極上当たレシビ!! グッズプレゼント!! 係

50円切手をはってね!

☆週刊少年ジャンプ19号の中で、面白かったもの3つを、面白かった順に番号で書き入れて下さい

1 2 3

(1)特別読切・ジェダの通学路 (2)NARUTO-ナルト-  
(3)斉木楠雄のΨ難 (4)黒子のバスケ (5)べるぜバブ  
(6)ONE PIECE (7)暗殺教室 (8)ニセコイ  
(9)新米婦警キルクさん (10)ワールドトリガー (11)食戟のソーマ  
(12)ハイキュー!! (13)SKET DANCE (14)HUNGRY JOKER  
(15)恋するエッジソン (16)クロス・マネジ (17)めだかボックス  
(18)BLEACH (19)銀魂 (20)こちら葛飾区亀有公園前派出所  
(21)特別とじこみ付録・広げよう友達の輪!! Jキャラ名刺カード  
(22)JUMP英雄G+ / (23)G入道!! (24)ジャンプ魂G! (25)表紙

希望の賞品 → ☐ Wチャンス 欲しい方に○しよう → ☐ A ☐ B

※週刊少年ジャンプ編集部は電話でのアンケートは一切行っておりません。  
このハガキは今後の週刊少年ジャンプの企画のために参考にさせていただきます。

住所 〒  
電話番号  
氏名 男 女 年齢

WEEKLY JUMP 2013

愛読者 アンケート 週刊少年ジャンプ No. 19

☆特別読切「ジェダの通学路」についてお聞きします。

1 主人公「ジェダ」の印象を教えてください。(3つまで)

①カッコいい ②カッコ悪い ③強そう ④弱そう ⑤男らしい  
⑥情けない ⑦親しみやすい ⑧親しみにくい ⑨面白い  
⑩つまらない ⑪優しい ⑫怖い ⑬新しい ⑭ありがた  
⑮真面目だ ⑯ふざけている ⑰かわい ⑱かわいくない  
⑲明るい ⑳暗い ㉑賢い ㉒バカっぽい ㉓友達になりたい  
㉔友達になりたくない

1 ☐ ☐ ☐

2 話の印象を教えてください。(3つまで)

①分かりやすい ②分かりにくい ③新しい ④ありがた  
⑤テンポがいい ⑥テンポが悪い ⑦先が読めない ⑧先が読める  
⑨明るい ⑩暗い ⑪迫力がある ⑫迫力がない ⑬読みやすい ⑭読みにくい

2 ☐ ☐ ☐

3 特別読切「ジェダの通学路」は本誌を買ったきっかけになりましたか?

①きっかけになった ②きっかけにならなかった

3 ☐ ☐

☆携帯電話についてお聞きします。

1 キミは携帯電話を持っていますか?

①持っている ②持っていない

1 ☐ ☐

2 1で①と答えたキミにお聞きします。  
その携帯電話はスマートフォンですか?

①はい ②いいえ

2 ☐ ☐

3 1で①と答えたキミにお聞きします。  
主に携帯電話をどのような用途に利用しますか?  
スマートフォンの方はA欄、それ以外の方はB欄に、  
以下の項目から選んで記入してください。(3つまで)

①電話 ②メールの確認・送信 ③ニュースサイトの閲覧 ④カメラ  
⑤スケジュールの確認 ⑥ブログの閲覧 ⑦音楽プレイヤー ⑧電子書籍の閲覧  
⑨LINE ⑩Twitter/FacebookなどSNSの閲覧 ⑪ゲーム ⑫その他

A ☐ ☐ ☐  
B ☐ ☐ ☐

☆タブレット型端末についてお聞きします。

1 キミはタブレット型端末(iPadやNexus7などといった、液晶画面に直接触れて操作する平板型の携帯情報端末)を持っていますか?

①自分専用のものを持っている ②家族と共有のものを持っている ③持っていない

1 ☐ ☐ ☐

Figure 1. Survey postcard included in *Weekly Shōnen Jump* n°19, 2013. One side asks for the three favorite series in the issue. The other side inquires specific impressions on the main character of a new serialization, together with questions on whether the reader has a mobile phone, a smartphone, or a tablet, and what do they use it for.

Apart from the aforementioned surveys, manga magazines are unique in the way their contents are highly dependant on popularity rankings. One well-known example of this system is Shueisha's *Weekly Shōnen Jump*, the contents of which rely entirely on its reader's ratings. The magazine ranks its series every week, and if a particular work ends in the last place three consecutive times the author will be asked to finish it within a short period. Due to this system, even if the low ranking series happens to have been a very famous one, it will be ruthlessly terminated. This is how a considerably famous work like *Shaman King* came to its end, to cite an example. Conversely, *HunterxHunter*, which has had periods when its artistic quality dropped dramatically, has been maintained by fans' continued enthusiasm. In other manga magazines, the sales of the comic book will also be taken into consideration before terminating a series, but it is not the case in *Shōnen Jump*.

This system can have a great impact on the work because it determines its continuation. Editors and writers of a series that is doing poorly will introduce plot changes to help it regain the readers' favor. A manga that is doing well will try to lengthen its story by including elements that were not initially planned. On the other hand, such works will be able to develop much more its concepts, characters and secondary plot lines.

Within famous series character rankings are also undertaken. The popularity of a character may have an influence on that character's prominence in the overall story, and can therefore shape the

narrative itself and propel different developments other than the originally intended ones. We find an instance of such an influence in the creation process of *The Rose of Versailles*. Author Riyoko Ikeda planned her story focusing on Marie Antoinette's life, but when soon after readers started showing more interest on a charismatic secondary character, the cross-dressed Oscar, it was the latter that became central to the plot. Similarly, another character, Rosalie, saw her importance decreased because of her unpopularity among readers (Shamoon, 2007: 8). According to Kan, readers' tastes regarding main characters also have an influence in editors when they review new projects, and it will be more likely that currently popular traits are chosen.

Besides resorting to surveys and polls, manga magazines tend to include fan-art sections and hold regular manga contests. While the fan-art section seems to be principally aimed at increasing fan participation, strengthen their ties to the published work and create a sense of community, contests are a serious opportunity for those who want to become professional manga authors. Taking for instance a *Hana to Yume* issue, published by Hakusensha, we find in its last pages two manga contests (see figure 2). The prizes include sums of money, trips abroad and a variety of products, usually together with the publication of the winners. A small section explaining some technical aspects for the submissions to be accepted (page formatting, inking techniques) follows the contests' information. The back cover of this issue advertises another illustration contest run by the same publishing company.

**第62回ビッグチャレンジ賞**

デビューの夢を叶えよう! 花とゆめ ザ花とゆめ 花とゆめonline

現在、花とゆめや少女まんが界で活躍する先生方の多くが、このビッグチャレンジ賞出身です!

**見せ場の演出...!!**

色んな種類の「見せ場」があると思いますが、私の場合は「ちょっとした非現実感とかスワイズ」に「楽しんで」ます。

高橋いつ先生の「フライング・コスモ」は403ページに掲載されてますのでぜひ見てね!!

**★応募のきまり★**

- 賞の趣旨と応募資格● ビッグチャレンジ賞は少女まんがが家業出を目的としたまんが賞です。応募資格は未発表のオリジナル作品に限ります。年齢・性別は問いません。他誌発表経験者でもOKです。
- 作品の枚数● 原則として24・30・32・40Pです。
- 原稿サイズと応募要項● 原稿サイズおよび素材の規定はHMCに準じます。この号のHMC作品募集ページの「原稿を揃く上での注意」を参照してください。また、原稿1ページ目のウラにHMCの「応募要項見本」と同じ内容の事項を記入してください。
- しめきり● 5月15日(当日消印有効)
- 一次審査通過者発表● 花とゆめ14号(6月20日発売予定)
- 審査結果発表● 花とゆめ16号(7月20日発売予定)
- おて光● 〒101-0063 東京都千代田区神田淡路町2-2-2 白泉社 花とゆめ編集部

第62回ビッグチャレンジ賞 係

●応募要項と賞金について●

原稿は安全な美観な宅配便にて返却いたします。なお、受賞者への賞金は結果発表日の発行日から1か月以内に支払います。

**作品募集中!!**

デビューへの道を最短距離で切り開く、このチャンスに確のこもった投稿をお待ちしています!!

**魅惑的な賞体系**

**ビッグ大賞** 賞金100万円 + 海外取材旅行(20万円相当)

**入選** 賞金50万円 + ノートパソコン

**準入選** 賞金30万円 + デジタルカメラ

**佳作** 賞金15万円 + コミックセット

**選外佳作** 賞金5万円

以下の賞金は、上記の賞に特別加算されます。

★作家審査員特別賞...賞金5万円

★編集長期特賞...賞金5万円

★U-19賞...賞金5万円

**応募者全員に4つの豪華特典**

- ①応募者全員に特製図書カードをプレゼント!
- ②特製原稿用紙50枚
- ③花とゆめ特製複製原画セット
- ④ビッグチャレンジ賞特製投稿マニュアルシート

★二次審査通過者全員に作品原稿をお付けして返却します!

**大活躍中!**

憧れの先生方が審査員★

第62回 審査員 菅野文、高尾滋、高屋奈月、福山リョウコ、山田南平 + 各誌編集長(敬称略 五千音)

第63回 審査員(予定) 絵夢庵、梅いつみ、中条比紗也、仲村佳樹、南マキ + 各誌編集長(敬称略 五千音)

やるなら今!!

Figure 2. 62nd edition of the "Big Challenge Contest" held by *Hana to Yume* magazine (issue 5, 2013). The first prize offers 1,000,000 yen and a trip overseas.







Like all publishing houses, we rely on the schooling method to find artists. Thus, all the magazines, boys and girls, young and old, pull their artists from their readers. That artists and readers are the same is crucial. (Prough, 2006: 149).

Recently, Internet has brought forward new ways for publishing companies to call onto amateur artists. We find a relevant case currently happening on the Japanese website *Pixiv*. Pixiv is an art webpage anyone can join in for free. It used to be in Japanese language only, which limited its members to mainly Japanese speakers, but it has recently incorporated basic translation for some of its contents to other languages (even though Japanese language is still needed to access detailed information on contest conditions, for example). It enables uploading pictures, tracking favorite users and collecting other artists' works. Both professional and amateur artists can be found on the site, and many of its users are strongly influenced by manga, have close ties with the *dōjinshi* world and produce a large quantity of fan artwork.

Pixiv produces a number of publications on paper. Titles like *Pixiv Girls Collection*, *Pixiv Annual*, and *Quarterly Pixiv* select a number of original artwork usually related to a specific theme. Since the website's popularity rankings are usually a basis for the selection of works, judging relies heavily upon amateur opinion and not professional evaluation (Reyes, 2012: 62). On the other hand, Pixiv continually features plenty of additional contests organized in coalition with other companies, including manga publishers. To cite an example, it partnered with Kodansha to hold a "Manga Scout Fest", which offered the professional debut of the winner's comic in one of Kodansha's manga magazines as the first prize (February to March 2013). Immediately after, Kodansha and Pixiv launched another contest named "Going Pro from the Start! Rookie Debut!" for the company's *Afternoon* manga magazine (April to June 2013)<sup>4</sup>. Entries for the first contest, which is already closed, surpassed 1000 submissions. It is worthy to consider here that while some contests are limited to Japanese nationals, some others, like the aforementioned ones, do not have nationality restrictions and hence consider participation coming from foreign fans.

Surveys and contests present a way for publishing companies to channel fan activity and keep it under their premises: it is the company that ultimately decides which work to terminate, what popular elements to introduce in a debuting series or which amateur submission wins the contest. These systems do not threaten copyright holders and their power to decide on how and when products are created, as well as what is done with them afterwards. The next section will bring into the analysis an example of fan activity going beyond the publisher's direct control.

## Amateur artists and publishers' interaction: the case of *dōjinshi*

Walking down the aisles of any big bookshop in Japan one can easily find manuals not only on how to draw, but also on how to format and print self-publications. Cheap and even free painting programs can be downloaded from the Internet and found in manga-related shops. Booking a table at a *dōjinshi* convention might cost around 6.900 yen, a price that becomes even lower when the booth is shared. Several small printing companies offer affordable prices for quality printing, and will send the finished works directly to the convention where they are to be sold. Japanese fans of manga have at their disposal a wide range of tools and resources to create. And they are using them.

---

4 The information in English for these contests can be found at <<http://www.pixiv.net/info.php?id=1440>> and <<http://www.pixiv.net/info.php?id=1571>> respectively.

An amateur, self-published, fan-run environment exists in parallel with the world of professional publishing companies. Heir of the underground manga produced by those artists who could not make the transition to the taxing demands of weekly magazines, the amateur world expanded dramatically in the 1970's owing to the increasing availability of cheap offset printing and photocopying facilities (Kinsella, 2000: 104). Amateur produced manga is known as *dōjinshi* (同人誌), a word which carries the connotation of something produced by a group of people who are similarly minded or share the same interests. Both amateur and professional artists group into so-called circles (サークル) to self-publish their own material.

*Dōjinshi* include a wide array of genres and subcategories, such as *yaoi* (featuring homosexual romance stories) or *loli-con* (where young, girlish heroines become the main characters). Apart from their varied classifications, they can also be either *parodii* or original. *Parodii dōjinshi* are derivative works presenting alternative narratives inspired by commercial manga, anime, games, novels, movies, dramas and so on. The term comes from the English word "parody", but it refers to derivative works in general, whatever their genre, and not only parodies. Original production, while being the core of the amateur activity at its beginnings, has decreased to the point of being practically overwhelmed by *parodii*, but still has a few conventions entirely devoted to it.

*Dōjinshi* are primarily sold at specially designed events, such as Comic Market, Comic City or Comitia, to cite a few examples. Some of them, like Comic Market, are run entirely by non-profit organizations managed by fans. Others, like Comic City, are organized by private enterprises like Akaboo. According to Kinsella, "amateur manga productions are the largest mass public gatherings in contemporary Japan" (2000: 110). Conventions provide a space where fans spread their networks and share their creations. In some of them, commercial booths have been assigned their own areas as well, which has transformed these events into a meeting point for the professional and amateur sectors.

Comic Market is the oldest and biggest *dōjinshi* convention in modern day Japan. It is held in Tokyo twice a year, summer and winter, and its goal is to provide a space for the selling of *dōjinshi*, excluding any other activity usually found in manga conventions abroad like panel discussions or live concerts. The initial driving force behind its foundation was the dissatisfaction existing towards commercial manga publications, and its purpose became that of providing self-publishing artists with a distribution network that could replace distributors catering only for big publishing companies. However, and after an evolution of more than thirty years, the Comic Market should not be seen as simply opposing commercial companies, but has become a place where amateur and professional worlds intertwine (Tamagawa, 2012: 124).

In 2007 attendees to Comic Market reached 550.000 people, women representing more than a half of both general attendees and participating circles. Up to a 41 percent of the circles produced derivative works based on manga, easily outnumbering circles drawing inspiration from games and animation (Comic Market Preparations Committee, 2008). In the winter Comic Market I attended in December 2012, people lined up outdoors for hours despite the cold and rainy weather, first to get into the premises, and then to buy from renowned circles, whose waiting lines extended out of the building into the chilly outside. The huge concentration of attendants required a great coordination effort from voluntary staff, and overcrowded the available public transportation systems.

In addition to *dōjinshi* conventions, second-hand shops like *Mandarake* or *K-Books* purchase *dōjinshi* that will be sold afterwards at their stores. These stores will usually devote one or more floors en-

tirely to *dōjinshi* and also include second-hand commercial manga. Buyers usually move back and forth between the commercial and amateur sections of the shop and acquire products from both areas. These shops, together with the increased use of Internet and on-line sales, ensure *dōjinshi* circulation after the event has finished, even though the main goal of the circles is in-convention sales. Conversely to the manga industry, the revenue yielded by amateur production has increased these last years, making it an aspect of the manga world that should no be overlooked (Noppe, 2010: 128).

While there are some amateur artists who do earn considerable gains for their activities<sup>5</sup>, these have usually been the exception. Conversely to the profit-oriented commercial production, *dōjinshi* producers devote time and energy to an activity that in most cases will have no economical compensation, and participant observation evidenced this situation. A wide range of artistic approaches and achievement could be easily perceived at a single glance. While some circles presented professional skills, others were much below the average quality offered in a commercial magazine, and their tables remained full of copies until the very end of the event as booths around them gradually emptied. Kan affirmed in her interview that none of the projects she had taken part in had gained much benefits, if at all, and that they felt satisfied if they could get their investment back.

Not limited by the set of standards and considerations that rule the big publishing companies, the *dōjinshi* world also preserves part of the creative freedom that was lost in the transition to commercial magazines and books managed by editors, which explains why some professional authors keep on self-publishing to some extent. For example, some of the *dōjinshi* had a format and shape different from the traditional paper sizes, a change that had an inevitable impact on the way the inner content was presented; some other experimented with unusual types of paper; and all kinds of drawing, paneling, inking and lettering styles could be found. It is important to note, however, that best-selling circles often pay close attention to the most popular series and styles, and try to be the first ones to offer parodies based upon the current tastes and trends among readers.

In her study of Japanese amateur manga subculture and its relation to the manga industry, Sharon Kinsella explains how the former has been associated to negative stereotypes in Japanese society since the Miyazaki incident in 1989, when a serial infant girl murderer was found to have had connections to manga and *dōjinshi* conventions<sup>6</sup>. From then on, the line dividing professional and amateur manga production was clearly drawn, the latter being regarded as a “violent, pornographic and crude form of culture”, and thus rejected as a valuable creative sector by editors and professional artists (Kinsella, 2000: 133). Nele Noppe provides further insight into the challenge amateur manga production presents to the traditional concepts of authorship. These are based on the idea that a single person produces something that is then consumed by readers, and therefore it is this single person that holds creation power and all the rights associated to it. The sharp distinction between professional and amateur artists is made even starker when the collaborative production of deriva-

5 The Comic Market Preparations Committee estimates that some circles sell more than 1000 copies in a single day (2008).

6 Between 1988 and 1989, 26-year-old Miyazaki Tsutomu abducted, murdered and mutilated four girls aged from 4 to 7. When he was arrested, it was discovered that his room was full of *shōjo* manga, *loli-con* manga, soft pornographic manga, and animation videos. Miyazaki had also produced *dōjinshi* and attended the Comic Market. Following his case, close attention started to be paid to manga conventions, shops and fans. The constant linking in public media of amateur manga subculture to the murders inevitably ended spreading the image of these fans as dangerous, psychologically disturbed youths (Kinsella, 2000, p. 126-128).



tive works mostly intended for personal consumption is contrasted to the Romantic idea of the lone author creating original works for the sake of art (Noppe, 2012: 131).

According to the copyright law of Japan, authors have the exclusive right to create and exploit derivative works (Japan Copyright Office, 2008: 20). "Derivative work" is defined as "a work created by translating, arranging musically or transforming, or dramatizing, cinematizing or otherwise adapting a pre-existing work" (Copyright Research and Information Center, 2006: 11). Parodii dōjinshi, which are not produced only for personal enjoyment but sold at conventions, are considered to be an illegal activity. Were Japanese publishing companies to institute legal proceedings against dōjinshi artists, they would probably win. However, there have been but a few occasions when a dōjinshi case was taken to court<sup>7</sup>.

Why is it, then, that manga publishing companies do not request the banning and prosecution of derivative works? In the interview, Kan explained two decisive factors she believes influence the present position of companies regarding the legal prosecution of dōjinshi: first of all, trials would be too costly, since companies would have to sue a large number of individuals and collectives; and secondly, a trial against fans would give a very bad image to a business that is trying to win as much support as possible from their readers. "Since fans are not causing problems, they let them do", she added. In other countries, legal systems expect copyright and trademark holders to actively defend their property (by denouncing infringements)<sup>8</sup>. Conversely, the approach in Japan to intellectual property does not place such demands on copyright owners. Therefore, publishing companies are free to keep avoiding conflict with fans as long as they wish.

Copyright issues being one of the greatest cons against dōjinshi creation, we find it offers, however, two advantages for the currently stagnant manga industry: the introduction of new talent, and the inclusion of new target audiences into genres that were not originally geared at them.

The customary procedure for someone to become a manga author requires a process of repeated interviews with an editor that usually offers advice and tips. The artist will bring in project after project until one of them satisfies the editor, who will then suggest a contest where the work can be submitted. When the time comes to decide the winner of the contest, editors will try to get their artist's work to be the chosen one. Even if the work does not end in the first position, it might be well received by other editors and the artist might be offered a chance to get included in the magazine, or to work as an assistant to polish their skills. Unlike in Western publishing companies, where digital portfolios and projects sent by e-mail have become increasingly widespread, Japanese manga publishing still relies heavily on face-to-face meeting and discussing of the artwork.

Until now, few editors would enthusiastically defend works that have been more often than not perceived as tasteless rather than creative. Kinsella explains how in the 90s, dōjinshi were seen

---

7 One of the few examples of action taken towards dōjinshi is the case of *Doraemon - Last Episode* (2005). The fan-made comic presented, in a visual style extremely close to the original, an ending for the well-known series by Fujiko Fujio. It sold over 13,000 copies. Shogakukan warned the author, who apologized and gave the publishing company part of the earned profits (Comipress, 2007).

8 For instance, the German Patent and Trademark Office affirms in its information brochure that "many trademark owners actively monitor their trade marks and permanently observe the relevant trademark registers with regard to possible conflicting trademarks". According to the same brochure, "it is important to (...) immediately act against detected copying or against misuse by later trademarks" and "seek the help of an expert, for example, a lawyer or a patent attorney to defend your trademark" (2010).

as over-personal, childish, boring and sickening, and the amateur artists described as “people lacking talent who could do nothing but talk about themselves or copy other people’s work” (2000: 133). Therefore, many editors had little interest in searching for new talent in places such as Comic Market. Even authors who had started as dōjinshi artists would deny such influence and omit their connections to the dōjinshi world when talking about their careers (ib., 134).

Nonetheless, and probably owing to the decrease in sales that demands new marketing and production strategies, nowadays we see how publishing companies have started to place their booths in events that, like the Comic Market, were initially only for dōjinshi. The overall quality of dōjinshi is said to have diminished after it became an easily accessible hobby for many amateurs who might not be aiming at professional production. Therefore, the percentage of people who actually start working for a publishing company has gradually become less and less significant as the number of amateur-produced works increases. In spite of that, we still find some recent examples of original self-publications that have been scouted and brought into professional publishing and even anime production, just like what happened with some dōjinshi artists at the phenomenon’s beginning. *Axis Powers Hetalia* (later published as *Hetalia: Axis Powers*), a webmanga produced by Hidekaz Himaruya, or *Hori-san to Miyamura-kun* (published as *Horimiya*), by HERO and Hagiwara Daisuke are two of these more recent cases.

According to Kan, editors are “always looking for new talent, so Internet and so on is a good gate, a new way to find people”. However she also felt that it was very often the case that “people found this way commit to one project, but they don’t follow it with a new one. Finding new talent in the Internet is not for manga, but rather for the covers in light novels”. This is to say, artists found through the Internet had proven to be unreliable in her experience. Nonetheless, she still agreed in that amateur self-production presents a number of undisputable advantages for the manga author-wannabe.

Namely, Kan explained how the pressure of knowing she would be participating in a dōjinshi together with other artists urged her to keep above minimum quality standards, hand in work on time and be responsible for her assigned tasks. According to her experience, circle members will usually meet and show one another their storyboards to detect inconsistencies and problems that go unnoticed to the authors themselves. The people who started the project will have, in addition to their artwork assignments, editing and organizational duties that make them responsible for printing, deciding deadlines, making sure everyone is working, arrange for convention booths and manage funds. Consequently, artists taking part in a dōjinshi circle are not only receiving artistic advice from their peers, but also getting used to take responsibility for their tasks, deal with deadlines, and be up to quality requirements. Furthermore, since there are not many restrictions upon the content itself, dōjinshi provide plenty of room for experimentation and innovation, two values professional manga industry is said to be seriously lacking at the moment. Even if only a minority of amateur artists actually go for introducing radical changes into their work, there is still a sizeable number of people trying out small alterations and personal touches, and seeing if they are well received or not.

On the other hand, dōjinshi activity also provides advertisement for professional works and brings in target audiences that were not originally included in the publishers’ aims. The first aspect becomes crucial in the massive marketplace we encounter in the manga production sphere and the Japanese entertainment industry as a whole. Jenkins explains how “the media industry is increasingly dependent on active and committed consumers to spread the word about valued properties in an

overcrowded media marketplace” (2006: 138). His analysis is based on American media industries, but it is perfectly applicable to our case as well. We find a major example of both in the yaoi dōjinshi subgenre and its (mainly female) fans, known as *fujoshi*.

As previously noted, despite the high level of freedom and overall lack of profits when it comes to drawing dōjinshi, best-selling circles are heavily influenced by popular trends and some of them are driven by what could be even considered as commercial strategies. It is crucial for these circles to discern which of the newly released series will become the most popular ones. According to Kan, being the first ones to create something about a series gives them preeminence over other famous circles, who will have to focus on another fandom. The result of this system is that in these particular cases, manga and anime series are receiving a great deal of attention even before being released. When a renowned circle, taking only promotional material into consideration, chooses one of the upcoming series, it puts it in the fan spotlight even before its release. This way, it creates high expectations and makes the work famous prior to the actual consumption by fans.

While, on the one hand, a part of the dōjinshi authors are extremely attentive to companies’ moves, new releases and trends, on the other hand fan response to dōjinshi has not gone unnoticed by editors and publishers. We find many instances of how companies are taking note of dōjinshi fans’ preferences and using them to their own advantage. Azuma explains how animation studio Gainax developed and sold in the Comic Market derivative works and alternative approaches to its own media franchise, *Neon Genesis Evangelion*. The founders of Gainax first grouped together as an amateur animation group, and were greatly knowledgeable of dōjinshi readers’ tastes<sup>9</sup>. Rather than doing sequels of their work, they created somewhat related concepts (that have little to do with the original in some cases), such as presenting their characters in a whole different setting or altering the way their relationships develop. Gainax themselves offered what was usually done only by fans in their derivative works but not by the official producers. Furthermore, director Hideaki Anno anticipated from the beginning that fans would create derivative works and sell them in the Comic Market, which is why he set up “various gimmicks within the originals to promote those products” (Azuma, 2009: 43).

Taking into consideration the significant amount of dōjinshi devoted to yaoi and the high percentage of dōjinshi artists and consumers that are female, the gimmicks Azuma refers to often focus on male characters and their relationships. Ironically enough, it is shōnen manga, mainly aimed at young boys, that gives prominence to male leads and therefore possesses the greatest quantity of raw material for yaoi fans to draw upon. Despite the fact that commercial shōnen series have not featured overt homosexual relationships among their male protagonists so far, artists and editors are paying closer attention to the interaction and design of male characters in order to appeal to the female audience.

During the interview, Kan commented,

“I think the dōjinshi scene has become powerful when I see *Jump*. I think *Jump* is going to appeal more to the female reader since it has had series like *Prince of Tennis* and *Reborn!* I could not imagine that there would be a female artist (like the author of *Reborn!*) coming

<sup>9</sup> Two of the first productions by the group of animators that would later create studio Gainax were *Daicon III* and *Daicon IV* Opening Animations, a pair of short animation films made for the dōjinshi conventions of the same name (in 1981 and 1983, respectively).



to *Jump* with a shōnen manga. It is said that she used to draw dōjinshi. An artist like her shows that *Jump* is thinking about dōjinshi, and fujoshi people, and selling their product to them. I see male characters having some “something” in the atmosphere, and then I think ‘ah, they are thinking of the fujoshi’”.

Indeed, in 2007 the *Oricon Style* entertainment magazine surveyed 2,933 young Japanese female readers and their favorite manga magazine was *Shōnen Jump* (Oricon Style, 2006). Preferred works mentioned by respondents, like *One Piece*, *Death Note* and *Prince of Tennis* have a wealth of yaoi dōjinshi devoted to them. In the three dōjinshi conventions that were used as observation site for this article, a considerable portion of the circles based their works on manga published by *Jump*. They had been clustered together in a specific area, which was clearly marked in the convention handout maps for fans to find the space right away. Most best selling circles had material of either *Jump* or other male audience-oriented products like fighting games. In their interviews with fujoshi fans, Daisuke Okabe and Kimi Ishida include reports of female fans regularly reading shōnen manga: “I tell my boyfriend that I’ve never read *Jump*. I still buy it every week and read it, though”. (Okabe and Ishida, 2012: 217).

This last statement implies much more than merely providing an example of a fan reading a magazine that is not initially aimed at her gender and age groups. As explained by Galbraith, fans of yaoi have been stigmatized by social standards as women “who are attracted to fantasies of sex that is not productive of children” (2011: 212), and thus, is sex that has no justification other than the pleasure itself. Yaoi readers, as well as many other dōjinshi producers and consumers, tend to conceal their practices, which evidences the negative connotations still attached to fujoshi in particular and otaku in general. Attendants to dōjinshi events like Osaka Comic City brought small suitcases or bags where they stored their goods, making it difficult to identify them as fans once they left the building. When talking about the Comic Market, Schodt makes the observation that “many of the kids (...) don’t want their parents to know they are here” (1996: 36), which is why taking photographs inside of the convention building is still strictly forbidden in all dōjinshi events.

Unlike the participatory systems we have analyzed in the previous section, we have seen here how the dōjinshi scene still presents many ambiguities. Being a phenomenon that has been increasingly growing, the time might come for companies and overall society to reconsider their positions towards it, but it is easy to see that any change will be the result of long-term social processes, constant trial and error, and discursive negotiation, rather than happening overnight.

## Conclusion

In this paper we have analyzed the different systems of participation manga publishing industries have devised as a way to involve their fans in their products. This results in the companies having a better grasp of fan tastes and trends within manga readership. Concurrently, they are giving consumers a voice and including their input into the production process. Moreover, Japanese manga publishers have traditionally considered their readership as a source of new artists and ideas, and thus encouraged fan’s creativity by organizing contests and making technical knowledge and specialized equipment available to the wider public. Owing to these efforts, readers can establish stronger connections with manga magazines and aspiring authors have it slightly easier to enter the professional world.

The Internet plays a major role in facilitating this dialogue. We have seen how Japanese publishers have started partnering with art webpage Pixiv, but this is only one of the possibilities the Web offers. Often seen more as a threat than an advantage by copyright holders all over the world, what the Internet is enabling fans to do is to take their creations out there. In the words of Jenkins, “to create is much more fun and meaningful if you can share what you can create with others” (2006: 140). In this case it includes making the artwork available for editors and publishers’ eyes in the easiest way possible, and hence provides the first step in the negotiations to follow. At the same time, the overwhelming amount of artworks and talented authors makes it more difficult for an individual to stand out, which explains why sites and companies are using alternative selection mechanisms like the user rating system found in Pixiv.

Furthermore, however limited to Japanese fans this dialogue might be right now, the Internet could also bring in the opinion and contribution of the foreign fan, which has been blocked until recently because of language barriers and reliance on analog systems of communication. As previously noted, the Japanese entertainment and media industry has mainly been focused on local consumers rather than foreign markets, but the last decades have seen how Japanese products gained relevance outside. Precisely now that the manga industry is facing a decrease in sales, it might be beneficial for it to include the foreign market not only as a source of new consumers, but also as a source of new ideas, methods, and artists to actively draw upon. It is evident the Internet would facilitate such a process, as it has already done so in other countries. To cite an example, there has been a wave of Spanish artists who have started working in American superhero comics produced by companies like Marvel and DC in what has been sometimes called the “Spanish invasion” of US comics (Siegel, 2010).

Together with the company-driven efforts to encourage, channel and manage fans’ dark energy, we also encounter a synergy going on between publishers and *dōjinshi* production, which is more controversial because of the latter including a great number of derivative works. Still burdened by the social stigma linked to *otaku* subculture since the 90s, *dōjinshi* are usually the result of close emotional ties to the original products, but have at the same time become a potential market ruled by its own trends and crazes, which are carefully observed by the few circles who are actually making a living of it in a more profit-oriented, commercial way.

After a period of repudiation of the *dōjinshi* sphere by commercial publishers, linked to the social scandals and overall negative public image the *otaku* were attributed, what we encounter nowadays is that the will to approach such fan activity is flourishing once again, if cautiously. In a system that still works on the basis of the concepts of authorship and copyright, and where the line between consumer and producer is still drawn, Japanese companies have opted for ambiguity: not banning *dōjinshi*, but not giving away their intellectual property rights either. In the words of Kan, “They want to keep it grey, so that they can go to trial anytime they want. They still want to be over the fans, they are not letting go. They might not say to stop the *dōjinshi* market, but they don’t want to let the copyright go”. Publishers have witnessed the increasing production of *dōjinshi* and the long history of specialized events, and are fully aware that taking legal actions against them could damage their relationship with fans.

We have also seen how *dōjinshi* are beneficial for those aspiring to be manga artists, together with their potential advantages for manga publishers, which include advertisement and the widening of their audience. Fans are not consuming *dōjinshi* as a substitution of the manga magazine, but as a complementary product, since it offers what the original series does not: alternative narratives and

interpretations based on the grand narrative or database hidden behind the commercial manga. Some of manga fans will be attracted to the dōjinshi of a new series first, but then resort to the commercial product in search of more data to complement their information, or vice-versa. As we have seen in the case of yaoi dōjinshi and female readers, a manga series that offers the set of adequate combinations might catch the eye of a dōjinshi fan more interested in the romance between the male leads rather than their eternal rivalry, and therefore add a readership group that had not been included in the original assumptions by publishers.

Through their surveys, contests, teachings on manga, and (hesitant but growing) approach to dōjinshi, Japanese manga publishing companies have a long history of including the reader as an active voice in both creation and evaluation of products. Seeing how popular media has rapidly evolved to more participatory and collective ways of production, the manga industry provides a perfect example of the ways in which the commercial sector can adapt to increasingly active readers and benefit from their efforts rather than completely blocking them out. It is a system that still presents problematic points and ongoing negotiation with fans, as well as a high reliance on analogical means of communication like survey postcards and face-to-face interviews with artists, but that has grown accustomed to taking the consumer as something more than a mere receiving end. It already has the foundation, the possibility, to evolve and further adapt to fan energy. This ongoing dialogue between commercial and fan domains has a positive influence on them both and could provide a model to follow as traditional notions of creative media production, intellectual property and consumers' roles continue to evolve.

## Annex 1: List of Japanese Terms

- Dōjinshi (同人誌): self-published amateur manga. The term in Japanese has the meaning of a publication produced and printed by a group of equals. It can be either original, when it does not draw upon any copyrighted source, or parody, when it uses characters, settings or ideas from a preexisting commercial work.
- Otaku (オタク, お宅): the word otaku has had its meaning diversified (and misused) by the Japanese mass media to the point it has even been used in contradictory ways. According to Grassmuck (1990), the smallest common denominator of the word would be that of teens who “despise physical contact and love media, technical communication, and the realm of reproduction and simulation in general”. This same author also points out “mania” as one of its main features. It is said to have originated in the fact that dōjinshi convention assistants would refer to one another by using the polite term “otaku”, and thus is often applied to manga, anime, games and dōjinshi fans. Lately its use seems to have grown wider, and while it still includes the meanings of “an avid collector” or an “enthusiast” of something, it might be used in spheres not related to technology, manga or anime, such as sports and music.
- Fujoshi (腐女子): is a self-deprecatory term used by yaoi fans when talking about themselves. It means “rotten girls”, which implies the social stigma attached to readers of such homoerotic works. It has been sometimes used by Japanese media to designate female otaku in general, and not only yaoi fans.



- Loli-con dōjinshi (ロリコン): derived from the expression “Lolita complex”, which alludes to Nabokov’s novel *Lolita*. It refers to manga, anime and dōjinshi portraying prepubescent girls as main characters, often (but not always) with an erotic undertone. The art style found in loli-con works is usually reminiscent of shōjo manga.
- Manga (漫画): is the Japanese word for comics. The kanji in the name mean “whimsical drawings”. It was first coined by the ukiyo-e painter Hokusai (1760-1849), and first used in the modern sense of the word by Rakuten Kitazawa (1876-1955), who is considered to be the founding father of modern manga and first cartoonist in Japan.
- Shōjo manga (少女漫画): manga aimed at young girls, usually aged from 13 to 16. Even though there are several subgenres, some features common to many shōjo manga include a strong emphasis on personal relationships and the protagonists’ inner world, together with a delicate, detailed drawing style that pays special attention to characters’ eyes, hairstyles, and fashion.
- Shōnen manga (少年漫画): manga aimed at young boys, from around 13 to 16. As happens in shōjo manga, there is a wide range of categories and subgenres. Broadly speaking, shōnen series tend to focus more on action, adventure and fighting; friendship and rivalry usually play important roles in the development of the story. Compared to shōjo artwork, shōnen manga generally favors bolder, sometimes less detailed, designs.
- Yaoi dōjinshi (ヤオイ): The word yaoi derives from the sentence “*yama nashi, ochi nashi, imi nashi*” (no climax, no punchline, no meaning), and it is mainly used to describe amateur work featuring popular fictional male characters having romantic relationships that, in most of the cases, were not intended in the original source. Its commercial counterpart is generally known as Boy’s Love (BL, or also *shōnen-ai*). The uses of the words “yaoi” and “Boy’s Love” are slightly different outside Japan, the former usually referring to more explicit sexual content than the later.

## References

- Azuma, Hiroki (2009). “Database Animals,” in *Fandom Unbound: Otaku culture in a Connected World*, Mizuko Ito et al., ed. New Haven: Yale University Press.
- Befu, Harumi (2003). “Globalization Theory from the Bottom Up: Japan’s Contribution,” in *Japanese Studies* 23: 1, pp. 3-22.
- Certeau, Michel de (1980). *The Practice of Everyday Life*, trans. Steven Rendall, Berkeley: University of California Press (1984).

- Comic Market Preparations Committee (2008). *What is the Comic Market?* Retrieved from: <<http://www.comiket.co.jp/info-a/WhatIsEng080528.pdf>> [2013-05-25].
- Comipress (2007). "Mangaka of *Doraemon - Last Episode* Apologizes to Shogakukan and Fujiko Production." Retrieved from: <<http://comipress.com/news/2007/05/29/2022>> [2013-04-20].
- Condry, Ian (2010). "Dark Energy: What Fansubs Reveal About Copyright Wars," in *Mechademia 5, Fanthropologies*, Frenchy Lunning, ed. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press. pp. 192-208.
- Copyright Research and Information Center (CRIC) (2006). *Copyright Law of Japan*. Tokyo: Agency for Cultural Affairs, Government of Japan.
- Galbraith, Patrick (2011). "Fujoshi: Fantasy Play and Transgressive Intimacy among "Rotten Girls" in Contemporary Japan," in *Signs: Journal of Women in Culture and Society*, 77:1, pp. 211-232.
- Garon, Sheldon (2006), "Japan's Post-war 'Consumer Revolution,' or Striking a 'Balance' Between Consumption and Saving," in *Consuming Cultures, Global Perspectives: Historical Trajectories, Transnational Exchanges*, John, Brewer and Frank Trentmann, eds. New York: Berg Publishers, pp.189-218.
- German Patent and Trade Mark Office (2010). *Trade Marks. An Information Brochure on Trade Mark Protection*. Retrieved from: <[http://www.patentamt.de/docs/service/veroeffentlichungen/broschueren\\_en/trademarks.pdf](http://www.patentamt.de/docs/service/veroeffentlichungen/broschueren_en/trademarks.pdf)> [2013-05-06].
- Grasmuck, Volker (1990), "'I'm Alone, But Not Lonely': Japanese Otaku Kids Colonize the Realm of Information and Media, A Tale of Sex and Crime from a Faraway Place." Retrieved from <<http://waste.informatik.hu-berlin.de/Grasmuck/Texts/otaku.e.html>> [2013-03-03].
- Grigsby, Mary (1998). "'Sailormoon': 'Manga (Comics)' and 'Anime (Cartoon)' Super Heroine Meets Barbie: Global Entertainment Commodity Comes to the United States," in *Journal of Popular Culture*, 32, pp. 59-80.
- Hein, Laura E. (1993). "Growth Versus Success: Japan's Economic Policy in Historical Perspective," in *Postwar Japan as History*, Andrew Gordon, ed. London: University of California Press.
- Japan Book Publishers Association (2012). *An Introduction to Publishing*. Retrieved from <<http://www.jbpa.or.jp/en/pdf/pdf01.pdf>> [2013-03-20].
- Japan Copyright Office (JCO). *Copyright System in Japan*. Tokyo: Agency for Cultural Affairs, Government of Japan.
- Jenkins, Henry (1992). *Textual Poachers: Television Fans and Participatory Culture*. New York: Routledge.
- (2006). *Convergence Culture: Where Old and New Media Collide*. New York: New York University.

Kan. Personal Interview. April 2013.

Kinsella, Sharon (2000). *Adult Manga. Culture and Power in Contemporary Japanese Society*. Richmond: Curzon Press.

Komai, Aiko (April 2013). "Comics: Manga Magazine Offers Tools of the Trade," in *Yomiuri Shimbun*. Translation retrieved from: <<http://www.cullmantimes.com/features/x2055658045/COMICS-Manga-magazine-offers-girls-tools-of-the-trade> > [2013-04-14].

Lozano, Artur (2009). "Genealogía del Tecno-Orientalismo," in *Inter-Asia Papers*, 7. Retrieved from: <<http://www.raco.cat/index.php/interasiapapers/article/view/133167/183188>> [2013-06-03].

McGray, Douglas (2002). "Japan's Gross National Product of Coolness," in *Foreign Policy*, May-June, pp. 44-54.

Murakami, Akane (2012). "Changes in Family Life Resulting from the Unemployment of the Husband." Retrieved from: <[http://www.jil.go.jp/english/JLR/documents/2012/JLR34\\_murakami.pdf](http://www.jil.go.jp/english/JLR/documents/2012/JLR34_murakami.pdf)> [2013-05-25].

Noppe, Nele (2012). "Dōjinshi Research as a Site of Opportunity for Manga Studies," in *Comics Worlds and the World of Comics: Towards Scholarship on a Global Scale*, Jaqueline Berndt, ed. pp. 125-144.

Okabe, Daisuke and Ishida, Kimi (2012). "Making fujoshi identity visible and invisible," in *Fandom Unbound: Otaku culture in a Connected World*, Mizuko Ito et al., ed. New Haven: Yale University Press.

Oricon Style (2006). "Unexpected! Girls' favourite manga magazines is *Shōnen Jump*." Retrieved from: <<http://www.oricon.co.jp/news/ranking/16844>> [2013-05-25].

----- (2013). "Manga Volume Sales Dipped 1.5% in Japan in 2012," translation retrieved from: <<http://www.animenewsnetwork.com/news/2013-02-03/oricon/manga-volume-sales-dipped-1.5-percent-in-japan-in-2012>> [2013-05-25].

Ōtsuka, Eiji (1989). "World and Variation: The Reproduction and Consumption of Narrative," in *Me-chademia 5, Fanthropologies*, Frenchy Lunning, ed. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press (2010). pp. 99-116.

Prough, Jennyfer Sally (2006). *Mediating Ningen Kankei: Gender, Intimacy, and Consumption in the Production of Shōjo Manga*. (Doctoral Dissertation). Ann Arbor: ProQuest Information and Learning Company.

Reyes, Carolina (2012). *Aproximación a la comunidad artista amateur japonesa. El caso de Pixiv, Drawr y Tegaki Blog*. (Master's thesis). Retrieved from <<http://www.recercat.net/bitstream/handle/2072/203074/Carolina%20Reyes%20Treball%20de%20recerca.pdf?sequence=1>> [2013-05-25].



- Schodt, Frederik L. (1983). *Manga Manga: The World of Japanese Comics*, Tokyo: Kodansha International.
- (1996). *Dreamland Japan. Writings on Modern Manga*. Stone Bridge Press: Berkeley.
- Shamoon, Deborah (2007). "Revolutionary Romance: The Rose of Versailles and the Transformation of Shojo Manga," in *Mechademia, 2, Networks of Desire*, Frenchy Lunning, ed. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, pp. 3-17.
- Shinmoto, Shin (2011). "A Fresh Manga Artist Interview," in *Samurai Manga Workshop*. Retrieved from: <<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=fxwcHnYcgLo>> [2013-05-05].
- Siegel, Lucas (2010). "Art Agent Macho Leads the Spanish Invasion of US Comics," in *Newsarama*. Retrieved from: <<http://www.newsarama.com/5248-art-agent-macho-leads-the-spanish-invasion-of-us-comics.html>> [2013-05-25].
- Storey, John (2003). "Consumption in Everyday Life," in *Cultural Studies and the Study of Popular Culture*, second edition. Edinburgh: Edinburgh U. Press. pp. 130-151.
- Tamagawa (2012). "Comic Market as a Space For Self-Expression in Otaku Culture," in *Fandom Unbound: Otaku culture in a Connected World*, Mizuko Ito et al., ed. New Haven: Yale University Press.
- Varied Authors (2013). *Weekly Shōnen Jump*, 19. Tokyo: Shueisha.
- Varied Authors (2013). *Hana to Yume*, 5. Tokyo: Hakusensha.
- Wong, Wendy Suiyi (2006). "Globalizing Manga: From Japan to Hong Kong and Beyond," in *Mechademia 1, Emerging Worlds of Anime and Manga*, Frenchy Lunning, ed. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press. pp. 23-45.